

DEFYING GRAVITY: BREAKING FREE

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Luke 15:11-24

¹¹ Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. ¹³A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your

hired hands.' " ²⁰So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." ²²But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

Context

Jesus taught in parables to make a spiritual truth more understandable and vivid. He often drew on common everyday experience, and he sometimes created extreme scenarios to push us into deeper thought and understanding. Here we glimpse the way God's extravagant welcome and extravagant love exceeds and transforms the prodigal son's "dissolute (extravagant) living" (v. 13).

There was no historical prodigal son, but there is a spiritual reality to God's grace, which breaks us free from the gravitational pull of our selfish ambition, poor choices, and destructive habits. That grace forms the basis of our generosity.

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Big Ideas

1. A **black hole** is when gravity is so strong nothing can escape and everything is pulled apart.
2. **Gravitational vortexes:**
 - a. *Distance* - going it alone
 - b. *Desire* - all impulse, no plan
 - c. *Dirt* - unworthiness
3. **Generosity defies gravity**
 - a. Intimacy with God
 - b. Vision for the future
 - c. Grateful worthiness

Reflect

1. Read the scripture passage carefully and slowly. What word or image stands out to you? Why?
2. Have you ever experienced a moment of transformative grace--when someone showed you unexpected or unparalleled love and acceptance? How did it change you?
3. What gravitational vortex pulls you away from generosity?
4. The father modeled generosity to his son. How do you "pass on" and teach generosity to your children, grandchildren, peers or others in your life?
5. What did budgeting mean in your life growing up? What does it mean now?

Clean Out Challenge

Open that junk drawer, closet, storage unit, garage, or basement. Finally do something about those items piling up.

See the list of items you can donate to:

[Habitat Restore](#)

[Kentucky Refugee Ministry](#)

Fill out an Estimate of Giving card

Email your weekly, monthly or annual estimate for 2019 to

Treasurer, Davis Marksbury
(LeeMarksbury@gmail.com)

Spending On Purpose

October 14 or 21

5:00 PM

Room 108

Learn more about building a spending plan, creating financial habits, and tools for freedom, purpose, and accountability.

Contact Gary Murphy if you are interested to know more or sign up for the class.

(gmurphy@financialengines.com)

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